



NEWS RELEASE

Tennessee Regulatory Authority

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TRA Chairman Tate Praises Senators Frist and Alexander for Assisting Tennesseans with Energy Costs

Nashville, Tennessee – In response to the announcement by Senators Bill Frist (R-TN) and Lamar Alexander (R-TN) that Tennessee will receive \$1.6 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Tennessee Regulatory Authority (TRA) Chairman Debi Tate today expressed heartfelt gratitude for the financial assistance and acknowledged the program's tremendous usefulness to needy Tennessee families.

"During times of extreme weather conditions the Low Energy Assistance Program is an extremely beneficial program for needy families," said Tate. "And on behalf of Tennesseans who have benefited from the program, I want to say thank you, because the program is a lifeline to those in need."

LIHEAP is a federally funded program that helps income-qualified individuals meet their heating and cooling needs. In Tennessee, LIHEAP grants are administered at the county level through various community action agencies statewide.

In addition to the \$1.6 million in funding, the state of Tennessee will receive an extra \$550,000 in emergency funds to help with emergency needs stemming from the colder than normal January temperatures.

"Senators Frist and Alexander expressed it very well in saying that families should not have to choose between putting food on the table and having heat in their homes," added Tate. "This financial assistance will go a long way towards ensuring that Tennessee families won't have to make that choice."

Rising natural gas costs and the potential impact on consumers have been the subject of widespread national discourse since mid-2003. It was the focus of a TRA sponsored natural gas symposium in August 2003 during which LIHEAP and other topics pertaining to the supply and availability of natural gas was discussed.

Senator Alexander will join the TRA and other state commissioners at the annual meeting of utility commissioners in Washington, D.C., to discuss these and other important issues facing Tennesseans. The meeting will take place March 6 -10, 2004 (visit www.naruc.org, for more information).

“We are honored to have Senator Alexander as our keynote speaker and to hear more about his initiatives, including Clear Skies and Internet Tax,” added Tate.

For information about the TRA, visit www.state.tn.us/tra, or for information about LIHEAP, contact the community action agency in your county.

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